

REMARKS

Claims 11-15, 17-19, 21-23, 25, 26, 51, 53, 56, 58-60, 64 and 65 are pending (claims 16 and 57 being cancelled by this amendment).

The Examiner rejected claims 11-19, 21-23, 25, 26, 51, 53, 56-60, 64 and 65 under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Evard (US 5,242,396) in view of Chiu et al. (6,224,535) and further in view of Wantink et al. (6,178,810), stating, in part, that Evard discloses the invention substantially as claimed except for the proximal section of the mandrel being annealed, and does not teach that the plastic material is PEEK, but Chiu et al. teaches a mandrel made of PEEK, and Evard teaches adhesive bonding the proximal end of the mandrel and does not list annealing as a suitable bonding means, but Wantink et al. teaches that polymeric materials may be secured together by heat and fusion bonds and adhesives, so that it would have been obvious that heat fusion is a functional equivalent to adhesives for bonding a polymeric mandrel to a catheter.

The Examiner states that heat fusion (bonding) is the same as annealing. However, Applicant's claims 11 and 51, as amended, require that the annealed proximal section is located distal to the bonded proximal end section of the mandrel, support for which can be found at page 3, lines 15-17. In contrast, the Examiner takes the bonded proximal end of the mandrel of Evard, modified in view of Wantink et al. to be bonded by heat fusion, as the annealed section set forth in Applicant's claims. Thus, Evard in view of Wantink teaches a mandrel with an annealed section which is coextensive with the fusion bonded end section of the mandrel. Consequently, Evard in view of Wantink does not disclose or suggest a mandrel having both a bonded proximal end section and an

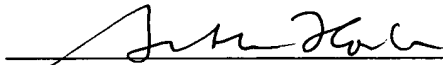
annealed section located distal to the bonded proximal end section of the mandrel as required by Applicant's claims 11 and 51 as amended.

Similarly, amended claim 19 requires that the mandrel is between but spaced apart from the inner surface of the shaft outer member and the outer surface of the shaft inner member, support for which can be found in Fig. 1B. In contrast, a mandrel with an annealed section which results from the section being fusion bonded to another component of the catheter as set forth by the Examiner could not be spaced apart from the surface(s) of the shaft within the shaft lumen.

In light of the above amendments and remarks, applicants respectfully request reconsideration and issuance of a timely Notice of Allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

FULWIDER PATTON LEE & UTECHT, LLP

By: 
Gunther O. Hanke
Registration No. 32,989

PMM:GOH:kst
Howard Hughes Center
6060 Center Drive, Tenth Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90045
Telephone: (310) 824-5555
Facsimile: (310) 824-9696
Customer No. 24201